

II.B.2.N.b. Temporarily flooded cold-deciduous woodland

II.B.2.N.b. POPULUS BALSAMIFERA TEMPORARILY FLOODED WOODLAND ALLIANCE  
Balsam Poplar Temporarily Flooded Woodland Alliance

POPULUS BALSAMIFERA WOODLAND

Balsam Poplar Woodland

ELEMENT CONCEPT

GLOBAL SUMMARY: Not applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

USFWS Wetland System: PALUSTRINE

**Florissant Fossil Beds NM Environment:** This temporarily flooded woodland occupies a reach of an unnamed, perennial drainage of only 2% slope. It occupies the stream channel on a small gravel deposit or bar, and both banks for nearly 0.5 km. This drainage is incised up to three meters, which may expose/deposit the substrate necessary for balsam poplar to root sprout and spread.

**Global Environment:** Not applicable.

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

**Florissant Fossil Beds NM Vegetation:** This type was sampled near the older part of the stand. Consequently the tree height for balsam poplar approached 20 m, the diameters averaged approximately 15 cm, and the largest diameter recorded was 24.4 cm. The largest tree within the plot was a Colorado blue spruce that was only approximately 20 m tall due to crown die-back, but was 73.1 cm in diameter. Tree canopy cover was approximately 75%, with 39 trees over 10 cm dbh present in a 400 m<sup>2</sup> plot. Foliar cover provided by the shrub layer was approximately 40% for the stand, with *Populus balsamifera*, *Dasiphora fruticosa*, *Salix monticola*, and *Salix lucida* the more common shrubs present. Graminoids provided less than 5% foliar cover, most of this from *Carex aquatilis*, *Carex nebrascensis*, and the exotic *Bromus inermis*. Forbs also provided less than 5% foliar cover; the most common were *Heracleum maximum* and *Equisetum arvense*. The balsam poplar stand was extremely species-rich with 41 species recorded. Ground cover was predominantly herbaceous and woody litter (approximately 40% and 50%, respectively), and surface water from the streambed (approximately 5%).

The balsam poplar stand is very linear but may approach the minimum mapping unit for the project. This stand of balsam poplar will resemble quaking aspen in terms of the aerial photo signature presented. This signature is dark green to black on true color and light pink to red on CIR.

**Global Vegetation:** Not applicable.

**Global Dynamics:** Not applicable.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree	<i>Populus balsamifera</i>
Shrub	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> , <i>Alnus incana</i> , <i>Dasiphora fruticosa</i>
Graminoid	<i>Carex aquatilis</i> , <i>Carex nebrascensis</i> , <i>Bromus inermis</i>
Forb	<i>Heracleum maximum</i> , <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> , <i>Equisetum arvense</i>

Global

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Not applicable.	

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree	<i>Populus balsamifera</i> , <i>Picea pungens</i>

Shrub	<i>Alnus incana, Salix monticola, Dasiphora fruticosa</i>
Graminoid	<i>Carex aquatilis, Carex nebrascensis, Bromus inermis</i>
Forb	<i>Heracleum maximum, Mertensia ciliata, Equisetum arvense</i>

**Global**

**Stratum**

**Species**

Not applicable.

**OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES**

**Florissant Fossil Beds NM**

**Stratum**

**Species**

None.

**Global**

**Stratum**

**Species**

**GLOBAL SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS:** Not applicable.

**GLOBAL STATUS AND CLASSIFICATION COMMENTS**

**Global Conservation Status Rank:** G?.

**Global Classification Comments:** Not applicable.

**ELEMENT DISTRIBUTION**

**Florissant Fossil Beds NM Range:** Only one stand of balsam poplar was observed and sampled on the monument. This stand occupies the drainage south of the footpath and east of the bridge comprising the trail in the northeastern portion of the monument.

**Global Range:** Not applicable.

**Nations:** Unknown

**States/Provinces:** CO

**ELEMENT SOURCES**

**Florissant Fossil Beds NM Inventory Notes:** Plot 74

**Classification Confidence:**      **Identifier:**

**REFERENCES:**